

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1-50. **(Canceled)**

51. **(Currently amended)** A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in a human mammal comprising administering a pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a soluble human lymphotoxin-beta receptor (LT $\beta$ R) comprising at least one ligand binding domain that can selectively bind to a human surface LT ligand fused to one or more heterologous protein domains and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, such that SLE is treated.

52. **(Canceled)**

53. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 51, wherein the ligand binding domain comprises a functional fragment sequence of amino acids selected from the amino acids of SEQ ID. No. 1 encoding an LT $\beta$ R ligand binding domain.

54. **(Canceled)**

55. **(Previously presented)** The method according to claim 51, wherein the heterologous protein domain is selected from the group consisting of immunoglobulins, serum albumin, lipoproteins, apolipoproteins and transferrin.

56. **(Previously presented)** The method according to claim 51, wherein the heterologous protein domain comprises a human immunoglobulin Fc domain.

57-58. **(Canceled)**

59. **(Currently amended)** The method according to claim 51, wherein the soluble human lymphotoxin-beta receptor (LT $\beta$ R) comprises SEQ ID. No. 1.

60. **(Currently amended)** A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in a human comprising administering a pharmaceutical composition comprising a soluble LT $\beta$ R comprising SEQ ID No. 1 fused to a human IgG1 Fc domain and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, such that SLE is treated.

61. **(New)** A method of treating systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) in a human with SLE comprising administering to the human with SLE a pharmaceutical composition comprising a polypeptide that comprises a soluble, ligand-binding domain of human lymphotoxin- $\beta$  receptor (LT $\beta$ R) fused to a human IgG1 Fc domain and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, such that SLE is treated.

62. **(New)** The method of either of claims 53 or 61, wherein the ligand-binding domain of human LT $\beta$ R comprises an extracellular region of SEQ ID NO:1.

63. **(New)** The method of either of claims 53 or 61, wherein the ligand-binding domain of human LT $\beta$ R consists essentially of SEQ ID NO:1.